United Nations ST/AI/2003/2

Secretariat

30 January 2003

Administrative instruction

Testing in the Security and Safety Service at Headquarters for use of illegal drugs and controlled substances

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, and for the purpose of establishing a programme for testing for use of illegal drugs and controlled substances in the United Nations Security and Safety Service at Headquarters, promulgates the following:

Section 1
Purpose and scope

1.1 The purpose of the present instruction is to establish in the Security and Safety Service at Headquarters a mandatory programme for testing for use of illegal drugs and controlled substances. The programme shall apply to all Security Officers and Professional staff members of the Security and Safety Service in order to ensure that they are able to exercise the requisite judgement in the exercise of their functions, which include protection of life and property at the United Nations, handling of potentially dangerous and life-threatening situations, and carrying loaded firearms.

1.2 Testing shall be limited to amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, opiates, phencyclidine, propoxyphene and synthetic opiates. Testing of samples for other illegal drugs and controlled substances beyond the authorized list or for other purposes shall be strictly prohibited.

Section 2
Procedures

2.1 In the initial phase of the testing programme, all Security Officers and Professional staff members of the Security and Safety Service shall be tested. All staff in those categories shall be informed when to report to the United Nations Medical Service (the "Medical Service"), which shall immediately direct them to the appropriate facility for sample collection and testing on the same day.

2.2 Afterwards, the testing shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

(a) Each month, 20 security personnel, including Security Officers and Professional staff members of the Security and Safety Service, shall be designated at

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random for testing. The random designation shall take place in the Executive Office of the Department of Management;

(b) Staff members designated for testing shall report to the Medical Service, which will immediately direct them to a facility designated for the purpose of collection and testing of samples;

(c) The test results shall be communicated to the Medical Service, which shall review/verify them and inform the staff members having been tested accordingly;

(d) In case of positive results, the staff member may request retesting of the original sample to be conducted by the same facility or another facility approved by the Medical Service;

(e) Positive results, whether resulting from the original test or retesting, shall be communicated to and discussed with the staff member in confidence by the Medical Service;

(f) When, in the opinion of the Medical Service, positive results cannot be attributed to reasons other than the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances, the Medical Service shall so inform the Staff Counsellor and the Chief of the Security and Safety Service.

Section 3
Failure to take the test

3.1 A staff member designated for testing may not be excused from the obligation to do so unless:

(a) He or she was on annual leave approved in advance by the Chief of Security, or on the sixth or seventh days of the normal work week, or not working during the day shift;

(b) He or she was absent from duty on the day of testing because of illness.

3.2 In the absence of a valid excuse under section 3.1 above, staff members who fail to provide the required testing samples shall immediately be relieved of their firearm and be subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with chapter X of the Staff Rules.

Section 4
Positive results

4.1 When the Staff Counsellor has been advised of positive results by the Medical Service under section 2.3 (f) above, he or she shall initiate an informal discussion with the staff member in the presence of the supervisor, in accordance with paragraph 18 of administrative instruction ST/AI/372, Employee assistance in cases of alcohol/substance abuse. If the problem has not been addressed appropriately by the staff member after three months, the Staff Counsellor shall initiate a formal meeting and the matter will proceed in accordance with paragraphs 20 to 26 of administrative instruction ST/AI/372.

4.2 When the Chief of the Security and Safety Service has been advised of positive results by the Medical Service under section 2.3 (f) above, he or she shall immediately:

(a) Relieve the staff member of his or her firearm;

(b) Remove the staff member from security duties;

(c) Reassign the staff member to other functions within the Security and Safety Service at Headquarters.

4.3 Upon recovery, following completion of the treatment programme, the staff member shall resume his or her previous duties at the same level and comply with any follow-up testing and treatment requirements. Should the treatment fail to lead to recovery, the provisions contained in the current administrative instruction on employee assistance in cases of alcohol/substance abuse shall apply.[1]

4.4 Subject to the provision contained in section 2 (f) of the present instruction and the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/372, full confidentiality and privacy shall be assured for all staff members tested under the provisions of the present instruction and for all staff members participating in any treatment programme arising as a result of a positive test.

Section 5
Final provision

The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 February 2003.

(*Signed*) Catherine **Bertini**
Under-Secretary-General for Management

[1] ST/AI/372, part III, section C.